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# Kremlin Says Talk of Putin-Biden Summit 'Premature'

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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

The Kremlin said Monday that it was "premature" to discuss a summit between Russian President Vladimir Putin and U.S. counterpart Joe Biden amid intensifying clashes in eastern Ukraine.

French President Emmanuel Macron's office said earlier that Putin and Biden have agreed to the summit "in principle," with the White House adding Biden's condition that Russia does not invade Ukraine.

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"It's premature to talk about any specific plans for organizing any kind of summits," Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Peskov added that no "concrete plans" had been put in place for a meeting.

The White House was notably cautious about the prospect of Biden-Putin talks.

Spokeswoman Jen Psaki said Sunday that Biden had agreed to meet Putin after U.S. State Secretary Antony Blinken's Feb. 24 talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and as long as Russian troops do not move into Ukraine.

An unnamed senior administration official told AFP: "Timing to be determined. Format to be determined so it's all completely notional."

The possible breakthrough came as Washington warned of an imminent invasion and Ukraine and Russia blamed each other for a spike in shellings on the front line separating Kyiv's forces from Moscow-backed separatists.

Ukraine's foreign minister welcomed the French initiative for a summit between Biden and Putin, saying Kyiv hoped it would result in Moscow pulling back its troops.

*AFP contributed reporting.*

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